

7 lowering the top drive assembly to bring the pipe segment into contact with the pipe string;  
8 monitoring the load on the pipe string;  
9 actuating the load compensator to raise the pipe segment a selected distance relative to the pipe  
10 string, if the load on the pipe string exceeds a predetermined threshold value; and  
11 actuating the top drive assembly to rotate the pipe segment to threadedly engage the pipe segment  
12 and pipe string.

1 ~~6~~ <sup>20</sup>. (New) The pipe running tool of claim ~~9~~ <sup>6</sup> further including a hoist mechanism connected to  
2 the lower pipe engagement assembly and operative to hoist a pipe segment into the central passageway of  
3 the lower pipe engagement assembly.

1 ~~7~~ <sup>21</sup>. (New) The pipe running tool of claim ~~20~~ <sup>6</sup>, wherein the hoist mechanism comprises an axle  
2 journaled to the lower pipe engagement member, a pair of pulleys rotatably mounted to the axle, and a gear  
3 connected to the axle, whereby the gear may be coupled to a drive system for rotating the axle.

1 ~~9~~ <sup>22</sup>. (New) The pipe running tool of claim ~~9~~ <sup>11</sup>, wherein the lower pipe engagement assembly  
1 comprises a spider elevator.

1 ~~8~~ <sup>23</sup>. (New) The pipe running tool of claim ~~21~~ <sup>7</sup>, wherein the drive system comprises at least one  
2 hydraulic lift cylinder.

#### REMARKS

Claims 9 to 23 are pending in this application. Claims 1 to 8 have been cancelled, claim 14 has been amended and claims 20 to 23 have been added. Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment, which is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made." The amendments find full support in the original specification and claims. Accordingly, no new matter is presented.

Applicants also submit herewith a new Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement to two recently discovered documents which disclose information relevant to the subject matter of the current

application. These documents were provided to Applicants prior to the conception of the current invention and are therefore prior art to the current application. Although the two documents are relevant, neither of the disclosures teach a Pipe Running Tool incorporating a load compensating feature as described and claimed in the amended application.

In a previous action, the Examiner allowed claims 1 to 19 of the current application. New claims 20 to 23 correspond to old claims 2 to 8 and have simply been rewritten to depend on claim 9. Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims are allowable as amended and respectfully request a timely Notice of Allowance in this case.

If the Examiner believes that an interview with Applicants' representative would be useful, he is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,  
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**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES**

1           14.    (Amended) A pipe running tool mountable on a rig and designed for use in connection with  
2   a top drive assembly adapted to be connected to the rig for vertical displacement of the top drive assembly  
3   relative to the rig, the top drive assembly including a drive shaft, the top drive assembly being operative to  
4   rotate the drive shaft, the pipe running tool comprising:

5           a lower drive shaft coupled to the top drive output shaft and comprising an adjustable segment that  
6   is selectively adjustable to adjust the length of the second drive shaft;

7           means for applying a force to the second shaft to cause the length of the adjustable segment to be  
8   shortened; and

9           a lower pipe engagement assembly comprising:

10           a housing defining a central passageway sized for receipt of a pipe segment,  
11           the housing being coupled to the top drive assembly for rotation  
12           therewith[;],

13           a plurality of slips disposed within the housing and displaceable between  
14           disengaged and engaged positions[;], and

15           a powered system connected to the respective slips and operative to selectively drive the slips  
16   between the disengaged and engaged positions.